

Message Text

SECRET

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51

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W

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O R 111215Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7283

AMEMBASSY MANAMA NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

S E C R E T TEHRAN 5694

EXDIS

DEPT PASS SECDEF, MIDEASTFOR, CINCUSNAVEUR, USCINCEUR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, US, IR, SA, RA, EG

SUBJECT: RETAINING MIDEASTFOR IN BAHRAIN

REF: STATE 146898

1. SUMMARY: GOI IS DISPOSED TO BE HELPFUL ON MIDEASTFOR ISSUE, BUT WE DO NOT KNOW YET WHAT FORM IRANIAN ASSISTANCE WILL TAKE. ACTION REQUESTED: APPRECIATE ADVICE ON LINE GOI MIGHT TAKE WITH GOB SHOULD IRANIAN MFA ASK FOR OUR SUGGESTIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JULY 10 AMBASSADOR SAW COURT MINISTER ALAM FOR DISCUSSION OF FUTURE OF MIDEASTFOR AT BAHRAIN. AMBASSADOR PRESENTED LETTER WHICH DREW ON REFTEL AND OTHER SOURCES TO MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(1) APPARENT GOB INCLINATION TO REVERSE DECISION ON TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT, (2) GOB'S INTEREST IN IRANIAN AND SAUDI VIEWS, (3) RADICAL ELEMENTS ON BAHRAIN, (4) INCREASING SOVIET ACTIVITY IN GULF AREA, AND (5) UTILITY OF MIDEASTFOR PRESENCE IN CONNECTION WITH LATTER TWO POINTS. LETTER EXPRESSED HOPE GOI SHARED THESE US INTERESTS AND ASKED FOR IRAN'S VIEWS. COPY OF LETTER POUCHED NEA/IRN.

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3. DURING ENSURING CONVERSATION, AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED AT LENGTH IMPLICATIONS OF HEIGHTENED SOVIET ACTIVITY IN PERSIAN GULF AND OBSERVED THAT WE WERE AWARE THAT PUBLIC GOI POSITION ON REGIONAL SECURITY MIGHT CREATE PROBLEMS FOR IRAN SHOULD IT WISH TO ASSIST WITH MIDEASTFOR. GIST OF ALAM'S REPLY WAS THAT, IRANIAN PUBLIC POSITION NOTWITHSTANDING, IT WOULD BE "TERRIBLE" FOR US NAVY TO LEAVE PERSIAN GULF AT TIME WHEN SOVIETS WERE AUGMENTING THEIR PRESENCE AND ACTIVITIES.

4. DURING EVENING SAME DAY, ALAM CALLED AMBASSADOR TO ADVISE THAT SHAH HAD READ LETTER AND DIRECTED THAT "NECESSARY STEPS WILL BE TAKEN". MATTER HAD BEEN REFERRED TO FOREIGN MINISTER WHO WOULD STUDY "AGREEMENT" TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THERE MIGHT BE SOME CLAUSE THAT WOULD "ALLOW FOR DEVIATION". WE ARE NOT CLEAR WHAT THIS MEANS. IT MAY MEAN THAT ALAM HAD REFERENCE TO AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN IRAN AND BAHRAIN THAT WAS DRAWN UP AT TIME OF BAHRAIN INDEPENDENCE. IT MAY ALSO MEAN THAT MFA WILL BE LOOKING AT HOMEPORTING AGREEMENT TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE MIGHT BE SOME LOOPHOLE THROUGH WHICH IT MIGHT SUGGEST GOB COULD SLIP TO ESCAPE TERMINATION DECISION.

5. ON JULY 11 DCM CALLED NADIM AT MFA WHO CONFIRMED THAT MINISTRY WAS SEIZED WITH PROBLEM AND THAT FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH US ON JULY 13.

6. PLEASE LET US KNOW BY NIACT IMMEDIATE CABLE IF DEPARTMENT OR MANAMA HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS OF LEGAL LOOPHOLES IN THE HOMEPORTING AGREEMENT OR OTHER POINTS TO BE MADE WITH GOB WHICH WE MIGHT PASS TO FOREIGN MINISTER. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT MFA WILL HAVE ITS OWN IDEAS, BUT IT MAY LOOK TO US FOR ASSISTANCE IN HANDLING TASK IMPOSED BY SHAH. WHETHER OR NOT SUGGESTIONS ARE LEGALLY SOUND WOULD NOT BE THE MAIN POINT. IT WOULD SEEM TO US SUFFICIENT FOR IRAN TO HAVE SOME SUBSTANTIVE AND REASONABLY CONVINCING ADVICE TO PASS TO THE GOB WHICH WOULD IMPLICITLY CONVEY IRAN'S ENDORSEMENT OF RETENTION OF MIDEASTFOR AT BAHRAIN.

HELMS

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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NNN

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